**Central Darfur: Deep concern for the safety and wellbeing of four Sudanese including HRDs detained in Zalingi city**

The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) expresses its utmost concern over the physical safety and wellbeing of four Sudanese citizens including three human rights defenders detained by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). They were detained between 10th October and 6th November 2023 and have remained in RSF detention in Zalingi city, Central Darfur to date.

**Mr. Adam Hassan**, a 28-year-old teacher in an IDP camp and human rights defender was arrested by a group of RSF members on 5 November 2023 in Zalingi city in Central Darfur State. Mr. Adam was arrested from the main street near Morain local market in Zalingi. He was then transferred to Alfong detention center in Zalingi for interrogation.

**Mr. Mohamad Ibrahim Osman** was arrested by a group of ten RSF members led Major Ahmed Dahab at about 05:30am from his home in Althura neighborhood in Zalingi on 6 November 2023. Mr. Osman is a 49-year-old high school teacher who was accused of working and collaborating with the Sudanese Army. Mr. Osman was taken to the RSF base in Alfong in Zalingi where he is currently detained.

**Mr. Naj Eldien Alzubir Khamis**, a 45-year-old human rights defender was arrested by a group of RSF officers from the main street in Aldbkar next to the Zalingi popular Court in Almuhafzeen neighborhood, Zalingi town on 9 October 2023. He was also transferred to Alfong detention center where he is currently detained.

**Mr. Almahi Musa Ahmed Bosh**, a 29-year-old human rights defender was arrested by a group of RSF members driving three military vehicles on 10 October 2023 while on his way from Zalingi market to Alhasahisa IDP camp. Mr. Bosh was then transferred to the RSF detention center located in Zalingi Eastern neighborhood. The said detention center was previously a Sudanese Army Base but was seized by RSF.

ACJPS has serious concerns for the physical safety and wellbeing of the detainees. The lack of access for lawyers and family members to the detainees, together with the well-documented use by the RSF of torture and other forms of ill-treatment against detainees, particularly whilst held in isolated locations, gives rise to serious concerns for their safety. Incommunicado detention significantly enhances vulnerability to torture and other ill-treatment. ACJPS has recently documented cases of torture and ill treatment of detainees by RSF including threats of sexual violence, beating with lashes and horse pipes, standing in the sun for long hours and denial of food among others.

We call upon the RSF to guarantee the physical safety of all detainees, grant them immediate and unequivocal access to their lawyers, family members and medical services, and unconditionally release them. We further urge the RSF to cease the harassment and intimidation of Sudanese citizens particularly human rights defenders and activists for their work.

**Background**

The RSF do not have legal authority to detain civilians or carry out law enforcement functions, thus making detentions of civilians illegal. On 21 January 2021, the Attorney General issued instructions explicitly limiting the powers of arrest and detention of civilians to the police and prosecutors, making clear that any detention by other forces is considered unlawful. However, all these reforms that had been put in place by the transitional government were washed down by the 21 October 2023 coup that ushered in the military regime and the recent armed conflict. The military regime has been characterized by impunity and a disregard for rule of law, with security personnel acting above the law. The already bad situation turned worse with the outbreak of the armed conflict in April 2023. Several civilians have been arbitrarily detained including incommunicado by both parties. In September 2023, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [reported](https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2023/09/sudan-turk-says-conflict-must-stop-it-too-late-pull-country-back) that “hundreds – and likely thousands – are being held incommunicado in appalling conditions” including political activists, human rights defenders and members of the resistance committees.